

Training

Workforce Development Efforts

Direct care work is a fast growing field. The US Department Of Labor reports that it is the 7th largest growing occupation in the nation. But filling new jobs is only part of the challenge. Retention of employees must be a priority. While the causes and solutions to retention are varied and complex, it is clear that training opportunities are one way to develop and maintain a skilled and committed workforce. The Department will continue to work with consumers, providers and training organizations to develop effective personnel development programs.

System Improvement Through Professional Development

The Department of Behavioral and Developmental Services (BDS) seeks to support its personnel through the continued design and implementation of a competency-based program linked to job performance and to the Department's values and strategic priorities. This is accomplished through the delivery of core-competency programs, technology training, conferences and individually tailored professional development programs. Certifications of Intensive Case Managers working in adult mental health services are already in place. A similar process is in development for personnel in the mental retardation service system for adult persons with mental retardation.

BDS is also committed to the design and delivery of opportunities for the continued education of contracted service providers in order to promote delivery of best practice. As exists for state personnel, credentialing opportunities in the areas of mental health community support, children's in-home and residential services are in place.

Creating opportunities through the utilization of a direct service professional curriculum is the focus of implementation in adult mental retardation services. The goal is to have a credentialing system fully operational by the end of 2002.

In adult mental health and children's services the

goal is to revamp the existing requirements to ensure that they reflect the current service system needs and to reduce any unnecessary barriers to staff recruitment and retention.

All training and professional development is done in collaboration with many community partners. Most significant are the cooperative agreements with the University system, the Muskie School of Public Policy, Center for Learning; the Behavioral Health Sciences Institute through Southern Maine Technical College; and AdCare, a public non-profit agency that provides training in substance abuse treatment and prevention.

The Department also

No company, no organization, can be better than its employees

Winning the Brain Race

By David Kearns & Denis Doyle



State of Maine
Department of Behavioral
And Developmental Services

Lynn F. Duby, Commissioner

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has strong partnerships with community agencies which deliver a significant portion of the on-going training necessary for licensing and other accreditations.

BDS works closely with the Bureau of Medical Services to ensure that training standards are consistent with and appropriate to Medicaid regulations.

Managing in Maine State Government is a training initiative supported by BDS. Executive staff from BDS have been involved with other State Departments and the Bureau of Human Resources in the design and delivery of the programs.

Key collaborators in the design of any new training initiative are the consumers of our services. This has been especially evident in the recent trauma, recovery and employment

training offered by the Department. BDS has supported several approaches to maintaining a well informed work force. Since 1996, 3,482 Mental Health Rehabilitation Technician (MHRT) certificates have been issued. This continues to be a dynamic and active process given the staff recruitment and retention issues reported by providers. Behavior Specialist and Other Qualified Mental Health Professional (OQMHP) certificates have also been issued for the past three years.

Person centered planning occurs in each system through the Individual Support Plans (ISP) or the Person-Centered Plans (PCP). Training is delivered in these areas mostly through community providers.

Each workshop and

conference is evaluated and a process is underway to conducting evaluations of effectiveness based on staff changes in knowledge or practice. BDS sponsored conference topics include:

- Trauma, Substance Abuse and Mental Illness
- Dual Diagnosis
- Case Management and Direct Support Services
- Deaf Services and Mental Illness
- Community Inclusion for Persons with Mental Retardation

*For more information visit:
www.state.me.us/bds/*